



### Toronto HomeShare Program

**Background:** The Toronto HomeShare Pilot Project was created in May 2018 as a City of Toronto initiative arising out of the Toronto’s Seniors Strategy, with funding from the Ontario Ministry of Seniors Affairs. The National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE) implemented the pilot in partnership with the City and the Toronto’s Seniors Strategy Accountability Table, a group of seniors, caregivers, and other community partners dedicated to adequately and effectively supporting Toronto’s aging population. The purpose of the pilot was to empower older adults wishing to remain in their homes with a means of obtaining additional income, light help with household chores, and companionship, as well as to address the lack of affordable housing in the City, particularly among students. In exchange for reduced rent, the students agreed to provide up to 7 hours per week contributing to the household. Among the 12 matched senior homeowners and students, many reported experiencing benefits from their participation, including decreased social isolation and financial burden. Based on the success of the pilot, on March 7 2019, City Council agreed to continue and expand the Toronto HomeShare pilot.

As of May 1 2019, Toronto HomeShare launched as a City of Toronto program, in collaboration with the National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE), matching older adults (aged 55 and over) wishing to share a spare room in their home with post-secondary students seeking affordable housing in Toronto. In exchange for reduced rent (\$400-\$600 per month as determined by the home owner), the student provides 5-7 hours per week of companionship and help with household tasks, such as preparing and sharing meals together, doing light housework, running errands, or walking a pet.

The Toronto HomeShare Program is unique in that it is entirely facilitated by social workers who will match participants based on a variety of characteristics and preferences, will ensure all participants receive a Vulnerable Sector Screening, and will be available for mediation and support throughout the entire home sharing process for both the home owner and the student. The Toronto HomeShare Program is more than a way to share a room in a house – it is a way to empower older adults to successfully age in place for as long as possible and remain engaged in their communities while providing safe and affordable housing for students. It is also a way to increase intergenerational connection and engagement.

**For general inquiries on the Toronto HomeShare Program, including how to join the Program, please call 416-978-7065 or email [toronto.homeshare@gmail.com](mailto:toronto.homeshare@gmail.com)**

For more information, please contact:

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